

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----130917 292148Z /73

P R 291400Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 10847

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, EG, IS, US
SUBJECT: FAHMY ON DEPARTMENT'S JUNE 27 ME STATEMENT

SUMMARY: FAHMY REACTION TO DEPT JUNE 27 STATEMENT IS
NEGATIVE. HE CONTENDS IT TOTALLY REFLECTS ISRAELI POSITION
AND CAMOUFLAGES USG PURPOSES. THUS, IN SPEAKING OF
PALESTINE "HOMELAND," USG SECRETLY BELIEVES LATTER SHOULD
BE PART OF JORDAN AND HAS AGREED WITH ISRAEL AND HUSSEIN
ON NO INDEPENDENT PALESTINE STATE IN WEST BANK AND GAZA.
ALSO CALLS STATEMENT A RETREAT FROM UN RESOLUTION 242,
ESPECIALY WITH RESPECT USE OF TERM "ON" INSTEAD OF "FROM"
IN REFERRING TO THREE FRONT WITHDRAWALS. CHARGES IT IS
ALSO LESS THAN "ROGERS PLAN." EQUALLY OBJECTIONABLE IS
NORMALIZATION LANGUAGE. CLAIMS ISRAELI PRESS HAILS STATE-
MENT AS CONSISTENT WITH BEGIN/DAYAN POSITIONS. I TOLD HIM
HIS INTERPRETATION TOTALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE AND SOUGHT
TO SET HIM STRAIGHT. IN CONTRAST, FAHMY'S DEPUTY,
AL-BAZ, VIEWS STATEMENT AS COURAGEOUS AND HELPFUL
ACTION ON OUR PART AT PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TIME.

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BELIEVE FAHMY REACTION PARTLY DUE TO DISGRUNTLEMENT
OVER GOE INABILITY PERSUADE USG ADOPT MORE FORTHCOMING
POSITION TOWARD PLO AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF CONTINUED
UNCERTAINTY RE USG POSITION ON PRECISE BORDERS. END
SUMMARY.

1. FAHMY RETURNED TO CAIRO YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. I MET

WITH HIM FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF TODAY. GAVE HIM COPY OF DEPT SPOKESMAN'S JUNE 27 STATEMENT, WHICH IT TURNED OUT HE ALREADY HAD. IN CONTRAST POSITIVE LOCAL PRESS PLAY GIVEN STATEMENT (SEPTTEL), FAHMY'S REACTION WAS TOTALLY NEGATIVE.

2. HE CONTENDED IT IS A "ONE HUNDRED PERCENT" REFLECTION OF THE ISRAELI POSITION. IN SUPPORT OF HIS CONTENTION, HE PICKED OUT SEVERAL POINTS:

(A) REFERENCE TO NEED FOR A "HOMELAND FOR PALESTINIANS" AGAIN FAILED TO DEFINE WHERE THAT HOMELAND SHOULD BE. HE PROFESSED TO KNOW FOR A FACT THAT "SECRET" USG POSITION IS THAT THAT PALESTINIAN "HOMELAND" MUST BE PART OF JORDAN. ALTHOUGH WE SAY EXACT NATURE SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE PARTIES, HE INSISTED THAT WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED WITH ISRAELIS AND HUSSEIN THAT THERE CAN BE NO INDEPENDENT PALESTINE STATE ON WEST BANK AND GAZA. HE ALLUDED TO STATEMENTS ALLEGEDLY MADE BY UNDERSEC HABIB SUGGESTING PALESTINE STATE BE UNDER JORDANIAN CROWN. MOREOVER, AS HE SAW IT, HUSSEIN'S REVIVAL OF UNITED ARAB KINGDOM PLAN MUST HAVE BEEN AT OUR INSTIGATION. ANY SUCH CONCEPT, HE ARGUED, IS UNACCEPTABLE TO PLO, WHICH REPRESENTS PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY, AND TO EGYPT AND SYRIA.

(B) HE THEN ALLUDED TO LANGUAGE STATING RESOLUTION
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MEANS "WITHDRAWAL ON ALL THREE FRONTS...." THIS, HE CONTENDED, IS A RETREAT FROM LANGUAGE OF UN RESOLUTION 242, WHICH SPEAKS OF "WITHDRAWAL.....FROM TERRITORIES." UNDER LANGUAGE OF DEPT STATEMENT, ISRAELIS CAN CLAIM IN THE CASE OF EGYPT AND SYRIA THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY WITHDRAWN "ON" TWO OF THE THREE FRONT IN SINAI I/II AND GOLAN I. MOREOVER, USG HAS STILL NOT STATED ITS VIEW AS TO WHAT THE EXACT BORDERS AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE. USG HAD DONE SO IN "ROGERS PLAN," BUT NOW SEEMS TO BE RETREATING FROM THAT CONCEPT. AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD ME, EGYPT AND ARABS CANNOT ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN WHAT USG PROPOSED IN "ROGERS PLAN," WHICH ARABS HAD ACCEPTED.

(C) WHEN WE SPEAK OF "NEGOTIATING WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS," FAHMY ARGUED, THIS IS THE SAME LANGUAGE THAT BEGIN AND DAYAN HAVE USED. THEY TOO HAVE REFERRED TO UN RESOLUTION 242 AS FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

(D) HE OBJECTED TO LANGUAGE ABOUT NEED TO TKAE "STEPS TOWARD THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL." APART FROM REITERATING GOE POSITION THAT ESTABLISHMENT

OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL IS NOT POSSIBLE,
HE VIEWED PLACEMENT OF LANGUAGE IN STATEMENT AS USG
DEMAND THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH
ISRAEL TAKE PLACE EVEN BEFORE ISRAELIS HAVE WITHDRAWN
FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

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EXDIS

(E) RE REFERENCE TO WITHDRAWAL "ON" SINAI FRONT, HE
NOTED, NOTHING WAS SAID ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY. AS SADAT AND HE HAD CONSTANTLY MADE CLEAR,
EGYPT CAN ACCEPT NOTHING LESS THAN THAT. UNLIKE THE
GOLAN AND EST BANK TERRITORIES, WHERE THE BORDERS ARE
ARMISTICE LINES, THE EGYPTIAN BORDER IN SINAI HAS LONG
BEE RECOGNIZED BY ALL STATES, INCLUDING US.

(F) FINALLY, HE CLAIMED THAT THE ISRAELI PRESS IS
HAILING THE STATEMENT AS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH WHAT
BEGIN AND DAYAN HAVE SAID. IF THIS IS USG POSITION,
FAHMY ARGUED, THERE IS LITTLE HOPE FOR JUST AND DURABLE
PEACE.

3. I TOLD HIM THAT I FOUND HIS INTERPRETTION TOTALLY
INCOMPREHENSIBLE. AS HE KNEW, DEPT STATEMENT HAD BEEN
ISSUED BECAUSE OF PRONOUNCEMENTS BY ISRAELI LEADERS
SUGGESTING AN INTENTION TO NARROW THE FRAMEWORK OF
NEGOTIATIONS AND EXCLUDE THE WEST BANK. DEPT STATEMENT
WAS NOT INTENDED BE REFORMULATION OF UN RESOLUTION 242,

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WHICH, TOGETHER WITH 33, REMAINS THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH OUR PEACE EFFORTS ARE BASED. IT WAS INTENDED EMPHASIZE OUR VIEW THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO PRECONDITIONS AND ALL MATTERS, INCLUDING WEST BANK, COULD BE DISCUSSED. AS HE ALSO KNEW, PRESIDENT CARTER HAS ARTICULATED US POSITION ON THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL INGREDIENTS OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE HAD HIMSELF HEARD THEM IN WASHINGTON AND EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION. DEPT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT IS IN NO WAY INTENDED ALTER WHAT SADAT AND HE HAD BEEN TOLD. I HAD ALSO SENT HIM A COPY OF VP MONDALE'S JUNE 17 ADDRESS TO THE WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, WHICH WAS A DEFINITIVE REITERATION OF USG POLICY. DEPT'S PRESS STATEMENT WAS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH VP'S ADDRESS.

4. FAHMY RESPONDED THAT IF OUR SOLE CONCERN WAS TO INSURE THAT WEST BANK ALSO BE SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION, THIS COULD HAVE BEEN DONE IN A BRIEFER STATEMENT WITHOUT SEEKING TO ADDRESS OURSELVES TO ALL OTHER ASPECTS. IN TOLD HIM THAT THIS WAS A MATTER OF JUDGMENT. IN OUR JUDGMENT, AS THE PRINCIPAL MEDIATOR SEEKING TO MOVE TOWARD A RECONVENING OF GENEVA, IT WAS NECESSARY TO ADDRESS THE ENTIRE CONCEPT OF WHAT THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD EMBRACE. STATEMENT IS NOT A REFLECTION OF THE ISRAELI POSITION, AS HE CLAIMED; IF HE WOULD LOOK AT IT CAREFULLY, HE WOULD REALIZE IT IS A BALANCED USG REITERATION OF WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED.

5. WE WENT ROUND AND ROUND ON THIS ONE WITH FAHMY UTTERLY NEGATIVE. HE RIDICULED EGYPTIAN PRESSMEN AS HAVING FAILED TO UNDERSTAND WITH IS BEHIND "CAMOUFLAGE" STATEMENT AND INDICATED HE PLANS TO SET THEM STRAIGHT IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY. I TOLD HIM IT WAS CLEARLY HIS BUSINESS TO DECIDE WHAT PRESS GUIDANCE TO GIVE, BUT URGED THAT HE REFLECT A BIT MORE ON THE DEPT'S STATEMENT AND SEE IT IN ITS PROPER

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PERSPECTIVE BEFORE HE DID SOMETHING THAT HURT HIS OWN CAUSE. I HAD FRANKLY EXPECTED HIM TO BE PLEASED WITH THE STATEMENT, WHICH WAS A CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS OPEN. HIS INTERPRETATION OF IT WAS TOTALLY DISTORTED AND UNJUSTIFIED. FAHMY REMAINED UNMOLLIFIED.

5. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, WHEN I SAW HIS CHEF DE CABINET, USAMA AL-BAZ, A FEW MINUTES LATER, AL-BAZ VOICED APPRECIATION FOR THE STATEMENT. HE SAW IT AS A

COURAGEOUS AND HELPFUL ACTION ON THE PART OF USG AT A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TIME. HE ATTRIBUTED THE SOMEWHAT MORE FORTHCOMING ISRAELI PUBLIC POSTURE IN THE LAST DAY OR SO, AS EVIDENCED BY ISRAELI PRESS OFFICE STATEMENT OF JUNE 28, PRIMARILY TO THE DEPT'S STATEMENT. I URGED THAT HE MAKE THIS POINT TO FAHMY BEFORE THE LATTER SAID SOMETHING FOOLISH TO THE PRESS WHICH COULD ONLY BE DETRIMENTAL TO WHAT BOTH GOE AND USG ARE SEEKING TO ACHIEVE, NAMELY, MOVEMENT TOWARD A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE.

6. COMMENT: APART FROM NIT-PICKING AND AN EFFORT TO SEE THE STATEMENT AS A DEROGATION OF UN RESOLUTION 242, FAHMY HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN AFFECTED BY THE NEGATIVE PLO REACTION TO OUR STATEMENT. HE FINDS HIMSELF IN THE POSITION OF HAVING LITTLE TO SHOW TO THE PLO FRO EGYPTIAN EFFORTS TO PERSUADE USG ADOPT A MORE FORTHCOMING POSITION TOWARD PLO AND HAS LOST FACE IN THE PROCESS. GOE HAS MADE INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE IN WEST BANK AND GAZA ONE OF ITS PRINCIPAL POLICY PLANKS AND, WHILE INITIALLY ENCOURAGED BY PRESIDENT'S "HOMELAND" STATEMENT, NOW VIEWS IT AS ERODING IN FACE OF ISRAELI AND HUSSEIN OBJECTIONS. HE ALSO REMAINS WORRIED ABOUT PRECISE USG POSITION RE FINAL BORDERS, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO SINAI, AND IS INCREASINGLY RAISING "ROGERS PLAN" AS MINIMUM THAT GOE AND ARABS COULD ACCEPT.
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